



## Water Resources Division's Aquatic Invasive Species of the Week!

FOR THE WEEK OF:

September 23-29, 2013

Golden Mussel *Limnoperna fortunei*

Member of the Least Wanted

**Origin:** Asia

**Current Distribution:** In 1990 it appeared in Argentina. It then quickly spread to four other South American countries. Not currently in the U.S.

**Means of Introduction:** In North America, the most likely pathway is from ballast water discharge.

**Description:** Shell has a distinctive golden coloration. The presence of a pearly layer inside the shell distinguishes it from zebra or quagga mussels. Adults are typically 0.75- 1.5 inches in length.

**Impacts:** Golden mussels have a high filtration rate which can ultimately impact native biota at all levels of the food web.

**Habitat:** The golden mussel can tolerate and flourish in a wide range of environmental conditions. However, it prefers freshwater lakes and rivers with stone and gravel substrates. It is fully capable of colonizing the Great Lakes Region.

**Interesting Note:** It is considered an "Ecosystem Engineer" because it heavily aggregates into beds, which changes the nature of the sediment thus changing the invertebrate communities which ultimately change fish predator diets.



For more information on the golden mussel, please visit the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers Environmental Laboratory's website: <http://el.erdc.usace.army.mil>